

IN THE CLAIMS:

Set forth below in ascending order, with status identifiers, is a complete listing of all claims currently under examination. Changes to any amended claims are indicated by strikethrough and underlining. This listing also reflects any cancellation and/or addition of claims.

1. (Currently Amended) A system for distributing personal identification numbers (PINs) comprising:

a plurality of client terminals, each of said plurality of client terminals being capable of requesting and receiving PINs;

a plurality of servers operatively coupled to said plurality of client terminals, each of said servers including a corresponding one of a plurality of PIN inventories, wherein each of said servers is capable of sending PINs to at least one of said plurality of client terminals; and

a hub operatively coupled to each of said servers, wherein said hub is configured to send PINs to each of said plurality of servers for inclusion within said PIN inventories.

2. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein said plurality of servers are geographically dispersed.

3. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein each of said plurality of servers is configured to send PINs to said hub.

4. (Original) The system of claim 3 wherein at least one of said plurality of servers is configured to send PINs to said hub in anticipation of going offline.

5. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein said hub is configured to request a quantity of PINs from at least one of said plurality of servers in response to another of said plurality of servers requesting at least said quantity of PINs.

6. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein said hub includes a central dealer database and each of said plurality of servers includes a corresponding one of a plurality of dealer databases, and wherein said hub is configured to synchronize said central dealer database with said plurality of dealer databases so that each of said plurality of dealer databases includes substantially current dealer information.

7. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein said hub includes a central PIN inventory including a plurality of PIN varieties.

8. (Original) The system of claim 7 wherein said hub is configured to distribute PINs in said central PIN inventory to at least one of said plurality of servers in advance of said hub going offline.

9. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein each of said plurality of servers tracks a quantity of at least one of a plurality of PIN varieties and requests additional quantities of said at least one of said plurality of PIN varieties in response to said quantity of said at least one of said plurality of PIN varieties falling below a low-watermark.

10-30. (Previously Withdrawn)

31. (Original) A method of distributing a personal identification number (PIN) through a client terminal, comprising:

generating, at a server, a request for a PIN;
transmitting said request for said PIN from the server to a hub;
receiving said PIN at said server from said hub;
receiving, at said server, a client request for said PIN, wherein said client request is generated at said client terminal and transmitted to said server; and
sending said PIN to said client terminal in response to said client request.

32. (Original) The method of claim 31 wherein said generating is initiated in response to a PIN inventory of said server not having said PIN.

33. (Original) The method of claim 32 wherein said generating is in advance of the receiving of said client request at said server.

34. (Original) The method of claim 33 including:
receiving, at said server, a hub request for another PIN, wherein said hub request is generated at said hub and transmitted to said server; and
sending said other PIN to said hub.

35. (Original) The method of claim 31 including:
sending, in advance of going offline, PINs in a PIN inventory at said server to said hub.

36. (New) The system of claim 1, wherein the hub comprises a server communication manager which sends said PINs to each of said plurality of servers for inclusion within said PIN inventories, and which sends a request to at least one of said plurality of servers for PINs included within one of said PIN inventories.

37. (New) The system of claim 1,
a first client terminal of the plurality of client terminals, wherein the first client terminal receives a first PIN; and
a printing element at the first client terminal, wherein the printing element prints the first PIN on a receipt.

38. (New) The method of claim 31 including:
receiving, at said server, a request for an additional PIN generated at said hub.

39. (New) The method of claim 31 including:
printing, at the client terminal, the PIN on a receipt, wherein the PIN is unique in relation
to other PINs received at the client terminal.